

Scanned from the collection of
David Pierce

Coordinated by the
Media History Digital Library
www.mediahistoryproject.org

Funded by a donation from
David Pierce

BEN-HUR



25¢

FOREWORD ~ 1880 — 1925

*S*INCE GENERAL LEW WALLACE wrote the last words of BEN-HUR forty-five years ago in the historic Governor's palace of Santa Fe, New Mexico, that immortal story, sub-titled, *A Tale of the Christ*, has been the greatest of fictional themes. Eagerly read in every English-speaking community and translated into many foreign languages, millions of copies have been sold and the circulation during the period has been as great as that of the Bible itself. This tale of Bible times was blessed by His Holiness Leo XIII. No other imaginative romance dealing with the Christian era has ever attained a tithe of its popularity.

*M*R. A. L. ERLANGER, toward the close of the century, realized the deep desire for a stage play based on the book, and on Nov. 29, 1899, produced the spectacular drama of BEN-HUR in the Broadway Theatre, New York. The success was instantaneous. For nearly a quarter of a century, the mighty drama held the boards. Theatres were reconstructed in every city for its gigantic effects, among which the chariot race at the Antioch circus stood out as a feat of unparalleled realism. The vogue of BEN-HUR was due not only to the theme, the spectacle and the admirable acting but equally to Mr. Erlanger's foresight and wisdom in maintaining the fine and reverential treatment of its grand subject by the author.

A FEW YEARS since—in the newer art of the motion picture—Mr. Marcus Loew undertook the tremendous enterprise of visualizing BEN-HUR, and with the cooperation of Mr. Erlanger and his partners, Messrs. Dillingham and Ziegfeld, now presents it as a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture. The direction of the work was entrusted to Mr. Fred Niblo, with the aid of the most distinguished players of the screen and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's unrivaled art and technical resources.

*M*R. NIBLO has handled the story of BEN-HUR in motion pictures with all the tenderness and delicacy and dramatic power that the subject matter calls for. The most casual reader of the book or former patron of the spectacle knows the richness of the material and the splendor and poignancy of the romance for picturization. It is now offered with the happy confidence that this immortal story has been filmed to the continual delight of millions of theatregoers in every part of the world where the newer art holds sway.

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER *Presents*

BEN · HUR

By General Lew Wallace

*Produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in arrangement with Abraham
L. Erlanger, Charles B. Dillingham and Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr.
From the novel published and copyrighted by Harper and Brothers*

Directed by FRED NIBLO

Adaptation by June Mathis. Produced from the scenario of
Carey Wilson. Continuity by Carey Wilson and Bess Meredyth

Mr. Niblo's Directorial Associates
Alfred L. Raboch and Reeves Eason

*Photography by Rene Guissart, Karl Struss, Percy Hilburn,
Clyde De Vinna*

Art Effects by Ferdinand P. Earle
Settings by Cedric Gibbons and Horace Jackson
Titles by Katherine Hilliker and H. H. Caldwell
Film Editor, Lloyd Nosler Assistant Director, Charles Stallings
Costumes by Theaterkunst Hermann J. Kaufmann, Berlin N. 54

Stage Presentation and Musical Score by
Major Edward Bowes, David Mendoza and William Axt

A Short History of this Mighty Production

*with many scenes from the photodrama
and with portraits of the characters*



NEW YORK—1926

Copyrighted by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer



ESTHER



BEN-HUF

The Cast of Characters

BEN-HUR RAMON NOVARRO
MESSALA FRANCIS X. BUSHMAN
ESTHER MAY McAVOY
MOTHER OF HUR . . . CLAIRE McDOWELL
TIRZAH KATHLEEN KEY
IRAS CARMEL MYERS
SIMONIDES NIGEL de BRULIER
SHEIK ILDERIM MITCHELL LEWIS
SANBALLAT LEO WHITE
ARRIUS FRANK CURRIER
BALTHASAR CHARLES BELCHER
MADONNA BETTY BRONSON
AMRAH DALE FULLER
JOSEPH WINTER HALL

Musical Score

by Major Edward Bowes, David Mendoza and William Axt



IRAS

The Production of "Ben-Hur"

TRADITION clusters around "Ben-Hur" as the most remarkable stage achievement of America. It is fitting that this well-grounded tradition is upheld by the Picture Spectacle, in its turn the capstone of the picturizing art.

"Ben-Hur," first staged at the Broadway Theatre, New York, November 29, 1899, effected epochal changes. Its new mark of magnificence excited national attention, whilst the nature of its action and the fineness of its handling called to the patronage of the Better Drama millions of persons whose training hitherto had been sharply opposed to the theatre.

Nearly half a million spectators saw it the first season. In the following year "Ben-Hur"

visited the large cities, an English production was staged in London, and the cult of the play spread even more widely. Clubs and secret societies were named after it, the merchant borrowed its name to boom his wares. The hall-mark of the fiery Ben-Hur steeds became known in every community, and was the first electrically lighted design in the sky, the precursor of our innumerable contemporary White Ways!

In each city the coming of "Ben-Hur" was an event. Stages were torn up to install the treadmills for the eight racing horses, while the great panorama of Circus Maximus that raced in the opposite direction, attracted almost as much awe and admiration.

THE countryside for two hundred miles around responded to the billing, special trains (like those to a circus) bringing in their loads of sightseers. Newspaper space given to the Wallace drama equaled that devoted to any major issue of the time. Editorials, meetings, lectures, talks from the pulpit, strikingly reflected the public interest.

For practically a quarter of a century "Ben-Hur" held dominance wherever presented, and the causes of its vogue are not hard to seek, for it was great Drama and great Spectacle in the historical setting of the birth of Christianity in the eastern half of the Roman Empire. The story is for people of all creeds and no creed; the spectacle of the Chariot Race and the many other tensely melodramatic scenes, stirred the pulses of the most indifferent. Throughout its stage career "Ben-Hur" was wisely maintained at the level of its original excellence, elaboration, and reverent spirit, and thus still enjoys a primacy in the affections of myriads of old theatregoers.

The New Ben-Hur

The Greater Ben-Hur exceeds the stage play, even as the Newer Art that has the whole world for its picturizing, exceeds the older one.

Now twelve teams of four horses each race seven laps around a real arena of vast proportions, laid out within a reconstructed and practicable Circus Maximus worthy of Antioch!

A fleet of a hundred antique triremes goes into the historic Tyrrhenian sea for the battle between the Pirates and the Romans.

For the first time one actually sees the Son of Hur assemble the Galileean legions on the mission of establishing a King in Judaea.

Jerusalem is restored! The life in the teeming market-places, with thousands of her nationals chaffering or disputing; the majestic onswEEP of the Roman lancers and spearmen through the City Gate; the court of Pilate and the Palace of Hur; the terrible Vale of Hinnom; the glad procession of Palm Sunday; the reunion on the hilltop overlooking Jerusalem, of Ben-Hur, Esther, and his blood-kin,—these things are not lath and canvas and groups of supernumeraries, but veritable reconstructions in outdoor Nature of the haunts and crowds of the Saviour's day.



MESSALA



TIRZAH



feet and presenting frankincense and myrrh... Herod, cruel, implacable, tries to destroy the new born Messiah by his edict of baby massacre... But now—in beauteous colors recalling the exquisite tints of Rubens' great painting, "The Holy Family"—Joseph and Mary and the Babe are in flight to Egypt, their tiny group awakens the spectator's awe and love in the scene before the Pyramid of Cheops at dawn—the hope of humanity is saved for the blessing of all peoples...

Keeping all the elements of the play and bringing the feud of Messala and Ben-Hur into the startling realism of the outdoors with its vast crowds and natural backgrounds, the Picture heightens the love interest of Esther and the counterplotting of Iras.

Here now, in Simonides' daughter, is a heroine in the grand tradition of Deborah, Ruth and Judith; a slave, and yet a destined Princess; the rescuer of Ben-Hur, and the finder of his lost kin! Iras, too, becomes less remote. The Picture imparts warmth of passion and subtlety of intrigue. Arabia kindles into life, and the Sheik Ilderim (who entrusted the Arab steeds to the reins of Ben-Hur) is a vital, interesting figure.

IN Italy, the gardens of Misenum, the triumph of Arrius and his son, recall the glories of Rome, and in the Syrian East the colorful life of Antioch and the Sheik's dower within the Orchard of Palms bring back the time when she held the gorgeous East in fee.

Nay more! The stage scene of the Magi kneeling before the shaft of light swells in the Picture into a great prelude, vibrant with ecstatic harmonies, of the Nativity of Jesus.

The Wise Men speed o'er the desert to find the new Light of the World... The shepherds, tending their flocks, worship the rising Star... As its glory fills the heavens, the scene of the action shifts to the Cave of David, and Joseph brings to Mary and her Holy Child the richly apparelled strangers from the East, kneeling at the Babe's

(continued on left page)



SIMONIDES



SHEIK ILDERIM



MADONNA



*"Their hearts beat fast; their souls thrilled; and they
shouted as with one voice, 'THE STAR! THE STAR!
God is with us'."*



"The Holy Child is born"



*Adoration of the
Three Wise Men of
the East:*

*Melchior, the Hin-
doo; Balthasar, the
Egyptian; Gaspar,
the Greek.*



"Five years since
he left us, mother—
and now he is a soldier,
and hath the ear
of Gratus"



Tirzah
and
Esther
in the
Palace
of Hur



"Misfortune! Ruin! I
have brought them
upon us. The wall—
I leaned upon it, and
a tile fell upon Gratus"



"Messala, by
the memory
of our child-
hood, speak
the word of
truth and ac-
quit them!"



Condemning
Ben-Hur to
the galleys
and his
mother and
sister to the
dungeon



"Oh, Lord, in
the hour of thy
vengeance—mine be
the hand to put it
on him!"



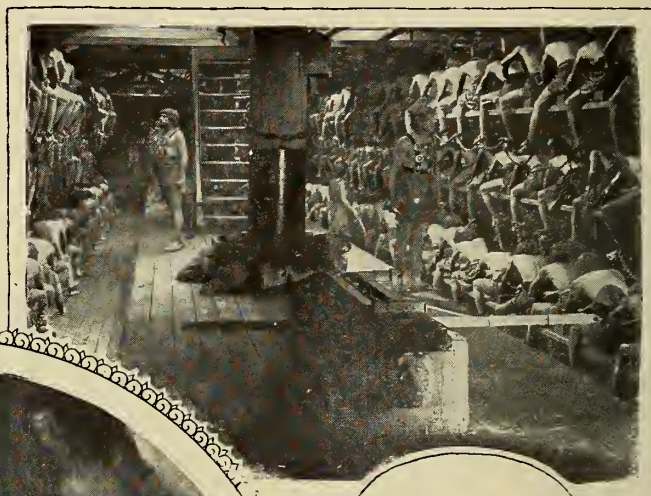
"In thy calendar I have been a slave three years; in mine, three centuries!"



Fighting now for his aged benefactor



THE ESCAPE FROM AMONGST THE DOOMED SLAVES



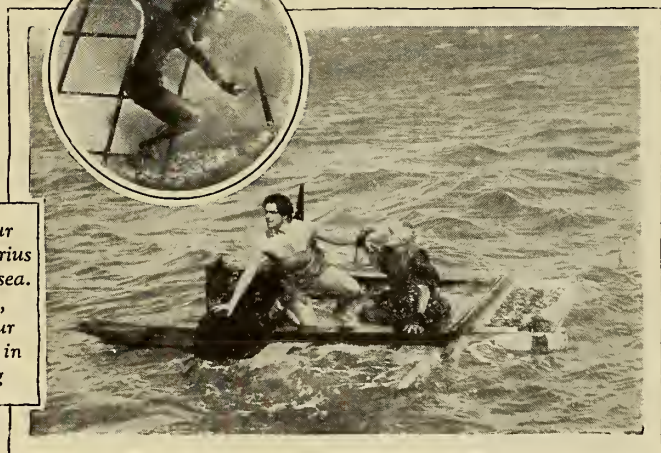
The hold of the ship was a hell of woe



"Do not shackle that man!"



Ben-Hur saves Arrius from the sea. Above, Ben-Hur battling in rigging



"One oath have I sworn, O Tribune, to repay the debt of kindness I owe thee—and that will I keep, or perish with thee!"



"He is my adopted son"



"All these things give I back to thee, Simonides, sealed to thee and thine forever!"



"One boon I pray—to drive thy Arab steeds in the Race!"



"Not my servant, Esther!"



"Heaven that hath given so fair a form cannot have denied thee a soul—"



"The sun of India is in thine eyes; in the corners of thy mouth, Egypt hath set her love sign!"



Sanballat reports that the Romans are laying huge bets on Messala



"Twenty talents! The sum is great, but I accept the wager: the difference between the Roman and the Jew!"

Ben-Hur, nicknamed the Unknown Jew, drives the white coursers of Arabia



Messala, driving the black steeds of Rome



Twelve splendid teams, representing the pride of twelve great Eastern peoples



Ben-Hur locks Messala's wheel, throwing him headlong in the dust.



"The consul rose; the people shouted themselves hoarse as they strewed the victor with flowers."





The
Gate
by which
the Saviour
entered
Jerusalem



In the awful
Vale of Hinnom
Esther finds the
lost Mother and
Sister of Hur.



"O Day of Glad-
ness! That giveth
me Mother, Sister
and thee!"



"Whence His
power I know not.
Some there be who call
Him the Messiah. This
only I know: He cureth
the sick, He raiseth
the dead!"

The Filming In Old and New Worlds

PART of the new Ben-Hur was made in Italy, and part in California. Never previously have such resources been lavished upon a production. To name just one typical instance, the building of the Ben-Hur navy.

A great shipyard at Leghorn was taken by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for the construction of Rome's fleet and Golthar's pirate galleys. For a year and a half the work progressed. The vessels were practical triremes, equipped with sails and triple banks of oars, and the leaders were of ocean-going proportions. The launching of the ships was a wonderful ceremony with high Italian officials and diplomatic representatives participating. Romans and pirates came to grapples on the broad Tyrrhenian; the action called for ramming, boarding, and the firing of the flagship. A bonus was paid to each sailor for the extra minutes spent on the doomed fireship; the last scene shows them diving off the blazing hulk in droves, whilst Ben-Hur rescues the commander Arrius on a plank. On a huge floating platform Fred Niblo filmed these scenes, distant and closeup, with the cameras high on scaffolding 40 feet above the sea's unquiet surface.

The Moors of Africa and the natives and animals of the storied East were drawn upon for the desert scenes, staged outside of Rome.

Shining, coal-black beauties from the illegal slave marts of the Sahara; grandly limbed Nubians from the Nile Cataracts; Syrians, Arabians, and Yemenites; a procession of camels from Tripoli; equine coursers from Transjordan; sheiks of Iraq and Hedjaz; Jews, Greeks and Romans, whose features reproduced the aquiline or straight-nosed types of their ancestors. 'Twas a veritable mart of the world, and here flowered forth the Roman holiday; for all Rome made the big days of the filming festal events and poured out into the Campagna, thousands upon thousands, headed by Italian Deputies and Fascist chiefs, and kept back out of the historic sequences by strong columns of stout Bersaglieri....

The Latin-Oriental scene was renewed in southern California when the company returned from its Mediterranean wanderings. Cedric Gibbons, art director, and Horace Jackson, architect and archaeologist, now had all the materials in hand. The sequences of

principals' scenes enjoyed the unrivaled resources of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. Aiding Mr. Niblo, W. Christy Cabanne filmed in technicolor the Flight Into Egypt, and Ferdinand Earle created Oriental backgrounds. An army of sculptors carved the massive figures to adorn the racecourse, and another army of mechanics laid out a hundred-acre area and built around it the Circus Maximus. The great Circus of Antioch was at last complete, and the last filming of Ben-Hur was the Race.

As Rome poured forth her hordes to see the motley mart of the East, so Los Angeles turned out en masse to see the terrific race-duel of Messala and Ben-Hur. Every studio in Hollywood declared a holiday. Distinguished representatives of civic, business and social life mingled with the foremost stars and directors of all companies in paying tribute to the most stupendous feat of the Newer Art. Scores of thousands of folk—garbed in Graeco-Roman or Oriental dress—occupied the seats of the Circus, and the casual spectator was just as likely to jostle a Fairbanks, a Pickford or other screen star in the Orientalized throng as to encounter a group of undistinguished extras.

The Race itself deserves a separate article; therein will be found full details of how it was contested. There remains but to say that none of History's scenes of veritable Antioch racing, Byzantine triumph or Latin Caesar's games ever exceeded this one. It was the culmination of three years of labor to visualize Lew Wallace's immortal work.

The Cast of the Stage Production

As Originally Made at the
Broadway Theatre, New York City
On November 29, 1899



BEN HUR	Edward J. Morgan
MESSALA	William S. Hart
ESTHER	Gretchen Lyons
MOTHER OF HUR	Mabel Burt
TIRZAH	Adeline Adler
IRAS	Corona Ricardo
SIMONIDES	Henry Lee
SHEIK ILDERIM	Emmett Corrigan
SANBALLAT	Robert Mansfield
ARRIUS	Edmund Collier
BALTHASAR	Frank Mordaunt
AMRAH	Mary Shaw

The Story of the Picture

THE story of Ben-Hur begins with the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem and the guidance of Joseph and Mary to the Cave of David when the innkeeper is unable to accommodate them at the inn.

Twenty years pass . . . Within the walls of Jerusalem and in the House of Hur, Judah, prince of that house and therefore Ben-Hur, welcomes his erstwhile boyhood chum, the Roman centurion Messala, who, however, rebuffs him.

Scorning the stout Jewishness of Judah and seeing the opportunity to degrade a proud subject and attainder his possessions, Messala puts the guilt on the Jew of his accidentally dislodging a tile that falls and hits the Procurator Gratus whilst entering the city. Judah, son of Hur, is arrested and sent to penal servitude in the galleys. His mother and sister, Tirzah, are likewise arrested and hurried away to a dungeon.

Arrius, commander of the Roman fleet assembled against the pirates, is lenient to the handsome young prisoner from Judea, whose story wins from him a certain degree of sympathy. Despite the custom of chaining up all the galley slaves before going into action, he orders the shackles to be removed from the leg of Ben-Hur. Therefore the Jew shares not the fate of the other rowers, doomed by their chains. The young man springs above decks and defends his benefactor after the pirates have succeeded in boarding the trireme. Nevertheless the ruffians scuttle the ship, although in the end the fleet of the Romans wins the general action. Arrius and Ben-Hur alike fall into the sea. Ben-Hur rescues Arrius on a raft. After the battle Arrius gives Ben-Hur his freedom and announces his intention of making him his son and heir.

A few years later the hero of our story returns to the East. Someone tells him of Simonides who he knows was his mother's business steward in the old days, but who is now a merchant prince of Antioch. He is deeply affected, and acknowledges him as their liege lord. Messala (it seems) had failed to sequester the main part of the Hur wealth, for Simonides had hidden it and not even the pains of the Roman torture chamber could wrest from him the secret. Now he gives it back to the young man and this event, conjoined to the gifts of his Roman foster father,

makes the son of Hur the richest of Roman subjects.

He learns that Messala, his old enemy, is seeking the chariot palm of the East in the Circus with his chariot and quadriga of Roman blacks. Through Simonides, Ben-Hur meets the desert sheik, Ilderim, and his daughter Iras. He asks the sheik the boon of driving his wonderful white Arabian steeds against Messala's Roman champions, and Ilderim, who has already made public proclamation questing a competent driver, gladly accedes.

Iras, in secret league with Messala, tries to tempt Ben-Hur to his ruin. He finds strength to resist her through Esther, the daughter of Simonides. After the wiles of Iras have failed, violence is attempted. Riding furiously to warn him, Esther saves Ben-Hur from death at the hands of Messala's assassins. Meantime the betting on the Circus race—which no less than twelve nationalities are to contest—waxes like a fire. The betting commissioners of Simonides taunt Messala. They cause the Roman to plunge recklessly and involve his friends, so that defeat means ruin.

Messala gains the lead in the fourth lap and maintains it nearly to the close. . . But Ben-Hur, coming up strongly in a diagonal direction at the final turn, catches one of Messala's wheels in the impetuous advance; the side-swipe tears it from the chariot body, precipitating the haughty driver in the trodden dirt and sending the driverless black steeds plunging wildly off the course. Ben-Hur wins!

Simonides has bought back the Palace of Hur from Caesar. Ben-Hur and Esther are seeking his mother and sister Tirzah. These unfortunate women have recently been released from dungeon through a change in procurators, Pontius Pilate having succeeded Gratus. In many years' dark durance they have contracted a terrible disease, and are outcasts from the community. They see Ben-Hur, but do not dare to approach him . . . It is Esther who finally finds them in the Vale of Hinnom . . .

Meantime Ben-Hur, balked of his family hopes, is organizing a Galileean soldiery in the larger Jewish national hope of seating the Messiah on a temporal throne. But his eyes are opened to the folly of his way when he learns the unwarlike mission of the Man of Sorrows.

(continued on page 18)

The Chariot Race

When Fred Niblo Made the Antioch Circus Chapter for the Filming of "Ben-Hur"

The day of the race . . . the amphitheatre built, and gleaming in the sun—the clutter of three months' construction work all removed—the gangs of mechanics replaced by crowds of equines, ostlers and skilled horsemen—the track perfect—the throngs pouring into the 80,000 capacity circus from every trolley and motor thereabout! Let us go!

BESIDES the large army of volunteer Graeco-Romans, some 10,000 extras were on hand, costumed, bearded, and bewigged by 9 A. M., when they took their places in the vast amphitheatre. With this enormous throng at work, with forty-eight horses galloping around the course in the mad seven laps of the great chariot race, with 150 other horses utilized, the scene was made with precision and without an accident. Mr. Niblo worked most of the day from his tower, which was nearly 100 feet high, supervising the forty-two cameras that shot 53,000 feet of negative during the day.

The first section of the players in the games was that of the fifty-four Roman Imperial Guard members who rode into the arena on horseback to clear the course.

Meanwhile many were rushing to and from the stands to the betting corner; Sanballat with his tablet was seen hurriedly recording wagers; Sheik Ilderim with Iras, and Simonides with Esther were seen in their box, while all about thousands of Romans, Jews, Egyptians, Assyrians and others gesticulated and chattered in anticipation of the great race.

Beside the director's "loud speaker" orders to every part of arena and auditorium, the camera people used the wigwagging system of army and navy signal flags to convey the orders of "Camera!" "Fadeout!" and "Cut!" Not only that; 12,000 feet of ordinary telephone wire conveyed verbal directions. An airplane flew overhead to record high and long shots directly down on the crowd.

The buglers blew their final signal . . . Huge tapestries were flung back, and out dashed twelve chariot teams with drivers in gay colors and attendants in more sober effects. The teams came on, four horses to each of the dozen chariots. From the entrance and the subsequent lining up for the start, both on-lookers and the thousands of workers in the picture realized they were due to see expert horsemanship.

The start was almost perfect, save that Ben-Hur was crowded short and off in ninth position. This was correct, as the story of the picture follows that of General Lew Wallace's book, which has him ninth at the start. Francis X. Bushman, as Messala, was off fourth, as called for by the story. William Donovan with the Corinthian team of bays took the inner pole quickly and held it for the first two laps. Bushman came up on even terms at the beginning of the third lap and held that position until the fourth, when he went to the front.

The sixth lap was the most exciting. Mickey Millerick, a famous horseman, driving the Byzantine team of roans, caught the inner rail at the south turn and just behind the Roman team. In so doing he crowded the Corinthian, Sidonian, Lydian, and Athenian teams far wide. The first went down and soon the others piled on top of him.

Ben-Hur (Ramon Novarro) had luckily gone wide and escaped the wreck. He went on to get even at the beginning of the seventh and last lap, and then the great incident of the story was enacted. Messala's wheel was torn off and he was smashed beneath his chariot and team. Ben-Hur went on to win easily amid the cheers of the vast crowd.

The Story of the Picture—concluded

. As the Divine One passes, Esther, mother and Tirzah kneel at the roadside. Piteously they extend their hands in entreaty. The miracle they ask is achieved. "Thy faith hath made thee whole!" Before one's eyes the scarred Tirzah becomes a young and comely woman, the mother is restored to the strength and health of ripe middle age! As Ben-Hur folds them with the beloved Esther in his arms, he cries:

"O day of gladness! Thrice blessed—that giveth me mother, sister, and thee!"

Gen. Lew Wallace and "Ben-Hur"

"BEN-HUR" was the product not of a professional author, but a busy breadwinner who devoted to it evenings and spare hours snatched from law practice, politics and business. Begun in 1875 and finished in 1880, its more than 125,000 words were twice written, the second time in a flowing purple calligraphy that excited the admiration of Harpers. It was the last great book antedating the typewriter era. An apocryphal story says that Gen. Wallace conceived the idea of writing "Ben-Hur" after a talk with "Bob" Ingersoll.

He went home and studied and finally decided to write the high theme and became neither skeptic nor indifferentist, but a convinced believer.

He himself says that for him in 1875 the very beginning of the book lay in St. Matthew's text:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men of the East to Jerusalem saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship Him.

After a year spent on the story of the wise men (now the first book or prologue) there came to him the main story of Ben-Hur twixt the birth and death of Jesus. Including the research, more than seven years of his literary activity was given to the whole. He had never seen the Holy Land, but worked always with a large chart of Palestine and the eastern Mediterranean before him. Years after, Wallace, when U. S. Minister to Turkey, retraced the steps of his characters over the holy ground and found that there was nothing to change.

Under a wide-spreading beech tree at Crawfordsville, Ind., the main part of "Ben-Hur" was penned, but the last book was written in a cavernous chamber of the Governor's palace in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Here, from 1878 to 1881, Gen. Wallace ruled the territorials for his employer, Uncle Sam. After a hard day's work arbitrating fights between ranchers and settlers, taming a refractory Legislature, or equipping expeditions to subdue Apaches, he would lock himself in the big adobe room until far in the night and write his re-created story of the world's greatest event.

"Ben-Hur" did not become a real best seller until two or three years after it was published.

Ultimately it was translated into ten languages and attained a contemporary circulation as large as the Bible. It was the only piece of fiction that the Holy See authorized to be translated into Italian, and His Holiness Leo XIII blessed the reverend translator. Further — when "Ben-Hur" was translated into Arabic and widely read by the sheiks—it started to pay back the thousand years' debt of gratitude of the Aryan world for the thousand years' entertainment of the "Thousand and One Nights." Still another curiosity—"Ben-Hur" is the only book in the world that effected a single sale of 1,000,000 copies, that being the order of a Chicago mail order house to the publishers a dozen years ago.

Lew Wallace was born at Brookville, Ind., in 1827 and died in 1905. His father, an emigrant from Pennsylvania, was Governor of Indiana, Congressman and Common Pleas Judge. Lew Wallace was educated to the law, and served in both the Mexican and Civil Wars, in the latter of which he became a general officer and corps commander at Shiloh and Corinth. In the post-bellum period he became State Senator, published his first novel, "The Fair God," in 1873, and while writing "Ben-Hur" was appointed by President Hayes to the Governorship of New Mexico. After the publication of "Ben-Hur" he was named U. S. Minister to Turkey, serving 1881-1885 and having much to do with the founding of Western colleges in the countries of which he has written. His last long fiction, "The Prince of India", was published in 1893.

Lawrence Barrett, Tommaso Salvini, and the Kiralfys for years begged Mr. Wallace to let them dramatize "Ben-Hur." The Kiralfys' proposal was to stage it as an outdoor spectacle on a thirty-acre plot in Staten Island. Towards the end of the century the author finally accepted the proposal that came through Mr. A. L. Erlanger to put on "Ben-Hur" as an indoor stage spectacle after the proper dramatization by William Young. It was Mr. Erlanger who convinced Wallace that such a production would in no wise shock nor offend, and by his wish the figure and lineaments of Christ were not used in the stage production and now are not used in the picture spectacle, the Divine healing power being indicated by a great beam of light.

